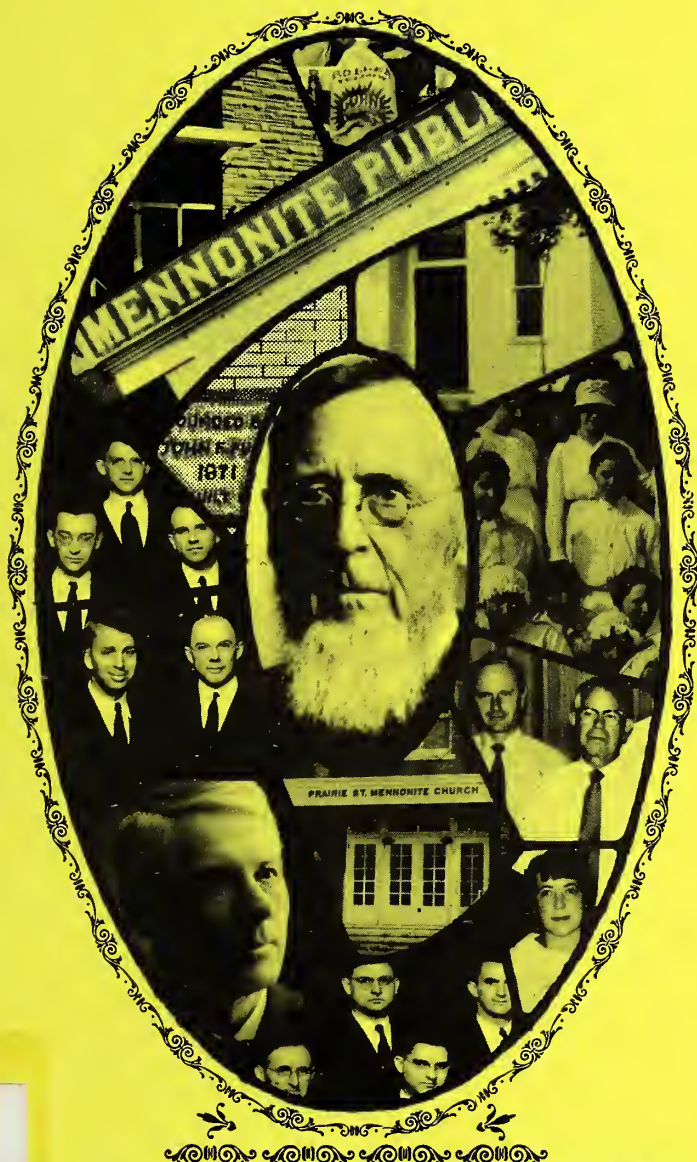


100 YEARS



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PRAIRIE STREET MENNONITE CHURCH

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Prairie Street MYF — assembling

Litho in U.S.A.— 1171 - 1M



Church Building, 1901

The Prairie Street Story

In the original Trustee records of the Prairie Street Church we read: "A meeting was commenced which was maintained regularly, for a time, during the winter of 1867-68 in the unfinished room now occupied by the J. Funk and Bros. Book Store.

"On the first Sabbath in December 1870 these meetings were resumed and continued every two weeks to the present time. They were held in private homes until the Fall of 1871 when the meeting house was completed and services held in it on November 26 in the same year.

"The minister is J. F. Funk; deacon, H. B. Brenneman. Services are held every Sabbath evening in the English language, and every two weeks at 10:30 A.M. in the German language. A Sabbath School is held in connection with the Church, and meets every Sabbath morning at 9:00 o'clock."

The Prairie Street Mennonite Church owes its beginning to the efforts of J. F. Funk, who gave up his lumber business in Chicago in 1867 in order to move to Elkhart. Upon his arrival here he organized the Mennonite Publishing Company in order to publish literature for the Mennonite Church. He was the first Mennonite to live in the city.

In the April 1867 issue of the *Herald Of Truth* editor J. F. Funk wrote: "Having purchased a new printing press and types the publisher has determined to move the office of the *Herald Of Truth* to the town of Elkhart, Indiana."

Library
Assoc. Mennonite Biblical Sem.
3009 Lenham Ave.
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In January 1872 the *Herald Of Truth* said: "The new meeting house in the town of Elkhart is completed and our first meeting was held in it on Sunday, Nov. 26. We also had a meeting on Dec. 3 and from that time forward will occur every two weeks. Communion was held on Dec. 25, 1871."

The charter members of the church were: John F. Funk, pastor; Salome K. Funk; Michael Keagy; Henry B. Brenneman, deacon; Matilda Blosser Brenneman; A. K. Funk; Joseph Summers; Barbara Summers; Martin D. Wenger and Malinda Blosser.

The first Prayer Meeting was held at the church in 1906 or 1908 due mainly to the efforts of C. W. Leininger.

The original building was erected in 1871. Its size was 40 x 36 feet. Plans for enlarging the building were made at a meeting of the congregation on Nov. 28, 1892. It was decided to place a furnace in the basement and build an extension of at least 20 feet to the east end of the building. In 1901 the entire building was raised and a new entrance was built on the west (front) end.

This building was used until Feb. 8, 1931. On Sunday morning, Feb. 15, fire damaged the building to such an extent that it seemed advisable to erect a new one. The last service, a prayer service, was held on March 23, 1931 when men of the congregation assembled to tear down the damaged building. From Feb. 22, 1931 to July 26 of the same year services were held in the Roosevelt School auditorium. By July 26 the basement of the new church had been sufficiently completed so that services could be held there. The first service in the main sanctuary was held on Dec. 17, 1933 when John E. Gingrich who had been ordained to the ministry the preceding Sunday, preached his first sermon.

In the early days a board fence four boards high was built around the church with a small gate at the west end of the yard; steps at the south side of the yard led to a platform making it easier for people to get into their buggies and wagons. A board walk extended south of the church to the second alley and a walk leading to the church were considered quite an advantage.

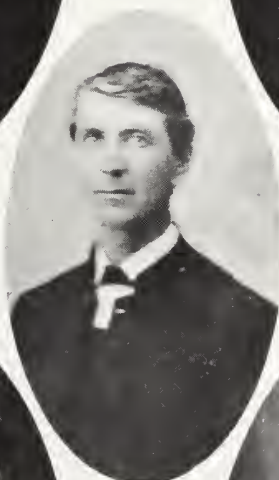
In 1959-60 a 50 by 90 foot annex with basement was built and the sanctuary improved at a cost of about \$125,000. This now provides excellent fellowship facilities and gives the church 31 Sunday school rooms. A Day Care Center, administered by Elkhart Community Day Care Center, is held in the basement of the fellowship annex each weekday.



John E. Gingrich



John F. Funk



John S.
Coffman



John E. Hartzler



J. S. Hartzler

Library
 of the Biblical Sem.
 300 William Ave.
 Elkhart, IN 46517

For the first 15 years membership did not exceed 16 persons. About 1890 the membership began to grow. The opening of the Elkhart Institute in the early nineties brought an increase in membership. In 1909 the membership stood at 109. This increase continued until the membership reached its peak of approximately 370 by 1940. From 1920 to 1940 the membership had doubled. In 1958, 318 were on the roll. The present membership (1971) is 350. This seeming loss of membership is due to the expansion program of the church by organizing branch congregations at Belmont Avenue, Elkhart; Pleasant View, north of Goshen; and Roselawn in northeast Elkhart.

The financial arrangements during the earlier years of the congregation were somewhat unique. The Trustee records state: "Funds shall be raised by equal taxation on all members according to their assessed valuation. . . ."

From the Trustee minutes of Jan. 12, 1877 we read: "Not having the assessed valuation of each member we took as a basis the County and State tax paid by each one, and laid a tax of thirty percent of this amount as follows:

	State and County tax paid by each	Amount of tax levied on each
1. George Hug	\$ 5.13	\$ 1.54
2. Henry B. Brenneman	12.96	3.89
3. Joseph Summers	24.46	7.34
4. Martin D. Wenger	12.85	3.86
5. John F. Funk	80.30	24.09
6. Abraham K. Funk	77.50	23.25
7. Michael Shelly	10.00	3.00
8. William Helm	5.72	1.72

The first Trustees were elected at a members meeting on Jan. 9, 1877. Elected were: Joseph Summers and Martin D. Wenger. May 17, 1877 the minutes say: "A tax of fifteen percent was laid on each member for laying a sidewalk on the church lot. William Helm was not taxed because of sickness, and John F. Funk was charged on only thirty dollars of the schedule."

Dec. 16, 1878 a tax of 22% of the original schedule was laid (reason unspecified). Sept. 17, 1879 a tax of 50% of schedule was laid for painting the church and repairing the fence. Records show

that such occasional tax levies were made, the latest recorded in detail as of Feb. 20, 1892, but the assessment of specific amounts and percentages continued well into the 1900s.

There is no better way to conclude this historical survey than with the benediction of Harold S. Bender with which he concluded a brief history of the congregation written for the fiftieth anniversary of the Sunday school at Prairie Street in 1930: "May the spirit of devotion and consecration to the work of the kingdom of God continue to grow stronger that this congregation may ever be found faithful in the Lord's work."

William B. Weaver and Wife



J. K. Bixler



Sunday School

A Sunday school was organized at the same time the congregation was formed. Deacon Henry B. Brenneman was its first superintendent. Between 20 and 30 pupils were enrolled. In 1892 the average attendance was 99. Total offering for the year was \$55.75. The first Primary Department was also organized the same year.

In 1930 the Sunday school enrollment, besides 24 enrolled in the Home Department, stood at 401, with an additional 136 enrolled in the extension school on Belmont Avenue.

In 1894 a Teacher Training Class was organized. In 1889 there was a Sunday school library with 135 volumes. The next year there were 180 volumes. In that year one pupil read 44 books. The present library contains over 1,250 volumes.

The extension school of 1929 has developed into the present Belmont Mennonite Church, and the 1936 extension school has grown into the present Pleasant View Mennonite Church, north of Goshen, organized as a congregation in 1942. A decade later an extension school and congregation was begun in northeast Elkhart which is today the Roselawn Mennonite Church.



Summer Bible School Teachers, early 1930s

L. to R.: Ollie Graybill, Lena Yoder, Marianna (Reiff) Stutzman, Geneva (Alexander) Friesen, John Coffman, Alice Erb, Esther Hooley, Huber Yoder, Nellie Mann, J. S. Hartzler, Edith Pletcher, Kathryn Stalter.



Sunshine Male Chorus 1933

Bottom Row: Harry Weaver, Christ Battler, Jason Miller, Enos Mumaw, director, †Paul Wittrig, †John Gingrich, *Ralph Hostetler, Ervin Boyer. Second Row: *A. R. Miller, Nathan Reiff, Harold Buzzard, Henry Mumaw, Walter Hooley, †Lester Mann, John Miller, †Cleo Mann, Charles Leininger. Third Row: W. Earl Mann, Henry Neff, Clifford Mann, *Walter Miller, Joe Buzzard, *Huber Yoder, William Mann.

Others who served during its active years from 1929 to early 50s: *Howard Leininger, Lester Thompson, Lorne Gingrich, †Allen Ebersole, Louis Stealy, David Esch, †Claud Hostetler, Leonard Yoder, *Lawrence Yoder, George Maniaci, †Leroy Hostetler, †Roman Stutzman, Donald Yoder, Glendon Bontrager, Lester Ebersole, Charles Cocanower, Harvey Mann, Owen Martin, Harry Burke, *Amos Good, William Alexander, Robert Wenger.

†Ordained to Ministry; *Deceased.

Sunshine Male Chorus

A meeting was held at the home of Enos Mumaw on June 17, 1929 to organize a men's chorus. Enos Mumaw was chosen as director, a position he held during the entire active years of the chorus. It was agreed that the chorus should meet for rehearsals every Monday night, except on the first Monday of the month.

At a meeting at the home of W. Earl Mann, the name *Sunshine Male Chorus* was selected by vote from among a number of suggested names. Lela Mann received a book as prize for having suggested the name that was chosen.

The Chorus had an active and much appreciated ministry singing at Prairie Street Church services, at neighboring churches, in jails, over the radio and on many special occasions. The organization was continued until the early fifties.

Young Peoples Social and Literary Association 1913-1949

At the suggestion of the pastor, J. E. Hartzler, an organization was formed to promote and properly regulate young people's activities in the church. The young people at this period were searching for activity. Each birthday was hailed as an opportunity for a party. To the pastor and the parents it seemed that some organization was desirable to better regulate and to promote these activities.

To quote from the first minute book of the association: "In order that the young people of the Prairie Street Mennonite Church may attain the highest possible standard of literary and social culture, from a Christian standpoint, it was suggested by the pastor, J. E. Hartzler, and some of the parents and young people of the church, that a Social and Literary Association for the young people would be a valuable aid for accomplishing this end.

"Consequently, at a social gathering at the home of Oliver Grosh, on March 7, 1913, a committee of five, viz. Walter Grosh, Enos Mumaw, Frank Rogers, Grace Hostetler and Gladys Weldy, and a temporary secretary, Inez McClintic, were chosen to confer with the Pastor with a view to bringing about such an organization.

"On Sunday evening, March 9, 1913, the Pastor met with a number of parents in the basement of the church. At this meeting the advisability of bringing about such an organization was fully considered, and they decided that such an organization would be a good thing if properly conducted along proper lines. The Pastor was appointed to meet with the committee which had been appointed at Groshes and draw up a Constitution and By Laws. This committee met at the Pastor's home, March 14, 1913, and framed a Constitution and By Laws.

"On the following Sunday, March 30, 1913, the Constitution and By Laws were referred to the parents for their rejection or approval.

"On April 2, 1913 at 8:00 P.M. a meeting of twenty-two of the young people was held at the home of Emma and Ella Wenger, and a temporary organization was effected with Harold Bender as President, Norman Schlonegar as Vice President, Nellie Miller as Secretary, J. B. Bontrager as Chaperon and Barbara Coffman as



Prairie Street Church Young Men, about 1890

Lower row, L. to R.: John Horsch, A. B. Kolb, George L. Bender, Ansel Coffman, [Amos] Ebersole, Menno Steiner. Upper row: Dewitt Good, John Byers, S. F. Coffman, Aaron C. Kolb, William Coffman, Andrew Mumaw.

Assistant Chaperon. After discussing and approving the Constitution and By Laws, another meeting was called to meet at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Hostetler on Friday at 7:45 P.M., April 11, 1913, to effect a permanent organization."

—*Nellie Mann, secretary*

This organization continued to function effectively among the young people of the church in unbroken succession until it was disbanded by vote of the members on June 27, 1949. Careful and detailed records were kept of every meeting and the records reflect the feeling of importance and significance that was attached to these meetings. A regular monthly literary program was held consisting of musical numbers, recitations and readings, debates and lectures, etc. Over the years various mission projects were undertaken such as the purchase of a Bible Dictionary for the Mennonite Bible School in India, support of a Primary teacher in India, support of an Armenian orphan child, and others. A Fourth of July picnic became an annual fixture. Special events such as birthdays or marriages of members always called for celebrations. The tenth as well as the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Association were observed with special programs.

The organization served its purposes well over a long span of years. The detailed records show that a total of 305 young people were at one time or another members, and the motto of the organization, *Social Culture For Social Service*, influenced deeply more than a generation of Prairie Street young people from 1913 to 1949.



Young People's Group at Pastor J. E. Hartzler's home, 1525 Prairie, October 1910.



H. A. Mumaw

Housewarming Shower for J. E. Hartzlers, October 1910



The People Who Lived, Labored and Served

Recognizing only a few of the vast army of men and women who were "The Prairie Street Mennonite Church" during the century.

H. A. Mumaw	Physician, writer, publisher and founder of the Elkhart Institute.
Lewis Kulp	Established Prairie Street Cemetery, was treasurer of Elkhart Institute, member of its Board and a church trustee.
Mrs. J. S. Coffman	Helpmate and adviser to her husband, she carried the burden of keeping the house and caring for the family during many lonely days and weeks while her husband was out on evangelistic preaching tours.
C. W. Leininger	Sunday school promoter, teacher and superintendent, trustee and treasurer of the congregation, and leader of first Prayer Meeting in the church.
A. C. Kolb	Sunday school promoter and teacher, editor and writer.
A. B. Kolb	Director of first singing school of Conference, teacher of vocal and instrumental music.
Dan Weldy	Leader, teacher and promoter of music.
Mrs. McClintic	With Mrs. Brubaker arranged for first meeting of the sewing circle in the congregation and in the Conference.
Adeline Brunk	Missionary to Armenia, she died as she reached the field, "obedient unto death."
A. R. Miller	Served as trustee, member of building committees, active in quartet and chorus singing — faithful pillar of the church to his hundredth year.
Huber Yoder	Served many years as Church secretary, historian, Sunday school leader and teacher, and an enthusiastic promoter of the church library.
W. C. Moyer	Composer of songs, member of quartets and chorus.
Enos Mumaw	Organizer of Sunshine Male Chorus and its director; promoter and leader of both vocal and instrumental music.

Ordained Men Who Served

John F. Funk	1871 — 1930 Pastor 1871 — 1910 Bishop 1892 — 1915
John S. Coffman	1879 — 1899
Samuel Yoder	1885 — 1925
J. S. Lehman	1892 — 1904
D. H. Bender	1904 — 1906
M. S. Steiner	March 9, 1893 to Nov. 6, 1893 (Ordained for Chicago Mission)
George L. Lambert	1902 — 1911
John E. Hartzler	Pastor 1910 — 1914
William B. Weaver	Pastor Sept. 13, 1914 to Sept. 1920
J. K. Bixler	1914 — 1939 Served as Bishop most of these years
J. S. Hartzler	1895 — 1940 Pastor 1923 — 1940
Christian Reiff	1924 — 1945 At Belmont 1929 — 1945
A. L. Buzzard	1929 — 1949 At Belmont 1931 — 1949
John E. Gingrich	Dec. 10, 1933 — June 1953 Full Pastor 1940 — 1953
D. A. Yoder	Bishop 1939 — 1955 (Bishop emeritus 1955 —)
J. D. Graber	1944 — Bishop 1955-58 and 1964-65
J. B. Shenk	Pastor June 7, 1953 — 1957
Howard J. Zehr	Jan. 15, 1958 — June 20, 1964 Pastor and Bishop
Russell Krabill	June 1, 1965 — Pastor and Bishop

Ordained for Service Elsewhere

Paul Wittrig	1938 for Imlay City, Michigan
J. J. Hostetler	1939 for Canton Mission
Leroy Hostetler	1940 for Belmont
Allen Ebersole	1941 for Ft. Wayne Mission
Lester Mann	Pleasant View



Recording History
Huber Yoder, Amos Good, J. S. Hartzler



D. A. Yoder

Other Ordained Men in the Congregation

Members at Prairie Street

Ralph R. Smucker	1953 —
C. M. Helmick	1958 — 1963
Urie A. Bender	1960 —
Gordon Schrag	1964 — 1966
John I. Byler	1966 — 1970
Simon G. Gingerich	1969 —

Appointed for Mission Work

Adeline Brunk — Armenia (1906)
 Lela Mann — Detroit and Chicago
 Carol Miller Kauffman — Hannibal
 Ida Grosh Brubaker — Ozark Mountain District
 Dora Shantz Gehman — India
 Royal and Florence Hower — Puerto Rico
 Ruby Hostetler — India and Ghana
 Stanley and Arlie Weaver — Navajo Indian Work
 Marvin and Mary Alene Miller — Japan

Deacons Ordained at Elkhart

D. H. Coffman
 Jacob Wisler (ordained before coming to Elkhart)
 G. L. Bender
 O. P. Grosh
 H. S. Alexander



Young Women's Group at Fourth of July Picnic

Front row: Edna Kauffman, Carol Miller, Violet Bender, Bessie Grosh, Susie Dettweiler, Edna Grosh, Mabel Weaver, Pearl Leininger, Emma Smeltzer, Alma Fink. Middle row: Alma Springer, Florence Bender, Dora Shantz, Fannie Shantz, Myrtle Grosh, Sarah Shantz. Back row: Inez McClintic, Mary Hostetler, Esther Springer, Bernice Stealy, Lillian Cripe, Marie Stealy, Grace Hostetler, Gladys McClintic, Nellie Miller.

Women At Work

Women's work in the Prairie Street Church has been very progressive over the years and has been blessed with much excellent leadership. Under the church-wide Women's Missionary and Service Auxiliary, Prairie Street women have had a girls' section (GMSA), and two women's groups: the Service Circle (which was previously the sewing circle), and the Women's Fellowship. All these have been coordinated under the Women's Council of the congregation. Under the new church-wide reorganization the women's work of the congregation will be related to the Women's Missionary and Service Commission.

Sewing Circle

The first sewing circle in the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference was organized at Prairie Street in 1895. Mary Brubaker, a member of the United Brethren Church, spoke to Mrs. McClintic and a few other women about starting a sewing circle in the Prairie Street congregation, and they decided to make the attempt. To their great surprise 60 women attended. The meeting was held in the Albert Brubaker home on the corner of Prairie Street and Park Avenue where C. P. Martins later lived.

The meetings were held in different homes and for many years in a large room on the second floor of the Mission Board building at 1711 Prairie Street.

Secret Sisters

During the war years Sister Esther Cocanower's class of young women wrote cards and sent small gifts to the boys in C.P.S. camps. After the war years the effort was turned toward the older women in the congregation. During the year each younger woman selected an elderly sister in the congregation and periodically sent her a card or a small gift. At Christmas time they revealed themselves to their older "secret sisters." In 1949 this time of disclosure began to be celebrated by a sumptuous dinner held usually shortly before Christmas. The first such banquet was held at the home of Mary (Mrs. John E.) Gingrich in December 1949. The organization is still active and serves as a bridge of good fellowship between the elderly and the younger women of the congregation.

Fellowship Groups

Prairie Street has a long history of emphasis on fellowship within the congregation. The Sewing Circle, Young People's Social and Literary Association, Male Chorus, Fourth of July picnic, and other organizations and traditions have reflected this emphasis on getting together. But besides these there have also been the regular fellowship groups.

The **Friendly Circle** is the oldest of these, having been in active existence for nearly 50 years and today includes the upper age bracket of members mostly above 65. At first it was composed of the members of two Sunday school classes of the younger married couples of the congregation. As time went on there occurred a natural age spread between the older and the newer members, so it was decided to divide. Those married for seven years or less formed a new fellowship group and named themselves

The **Loyal Companions**. The time and age process continued to work and some years later the group known as

Christian Comrades emerged. Still later the next age bracket felt drawn together into what is known as the

Witmarsum group. These groups include some members from neighboring Mennonite churches, particularly those who were once themselves members at Prairie Street.

Sunday school classes are developing a sense of identity as groups and are organized for fellowship as well as for Bible study, discussion, and service. Among these are the **Pathfinders**, **Disciples**, **Open Circle** and others. Sunday noon fellowship dinners by Sunday school classes or by a combination of classes are a frequent occurrence.

Historical Hi-Lights

May 27, 1865	J. F. Funk ordained to ministry in Grundy County, Illinois.
April 6, 1867 1868	J. F. Funk moved to Elkhart from Chicago. Services held in a room rented during the week by a private school.
1870-71	First meeting house completed.
Nov. 26, 1871	First meeting held in newly completed building.
Dec. 25, 1871	First communion service held in new meeting house.
Jan. 9, 1877	First Trustees elected at Members' Meeting: Joseph Summers and Martin D. Wenger.
June 1879	J. S. Coffman moved to Elkhart from Virginia.
Autumn, 1879	Sunday school opened at Jones Schoolhouse east of Shaum Church. A. C. Kolb and Dewitt Good, superintendents.
1880 or 1881	A. C. Kolb and A. L. Buzzard opened Sunday school at Rowe Church standing empty on east side of Elkhart; was replaced by a Lutheran Sunday school.
1882	Mennonite Evangelizing Committee organized.
1886	Abram B. Kolb moved to Elkhart from Ontario.
1889	Aaron C. Kolb moved to Elkhart from Ontario.
1890	G. L. Bender moved to Elkhart from Pennsylvania.
Nov. 28, 1892	Meeting decides to enlarge building and install furnace in basement.
1892	Sunday school enrollment stood at 300.
June 6, 1892	John F. Funk ordained Bishop.
1892	A. B. Kolb conducted first singing school held in Indiana-Michigan Conference.
1892	Sunday school opened in Wolf Addition. Discontinued after brief period because other Sunday schools were opened in area. M. S. Steiner and A. B. Kolb were leaders.

March 9, 1893	First ordination service held. M. S. Steiner was ordained for Chicago Mission and Daniel H. Coffman deacon for congregation.
1892-93	Addition built on east end of church.
Autumn 1894	Dr. H. A. Mumaw opened a private school in Elkhart. This developed into the Elkhart Institute.
1894	Teacher Training Class opened in Sunday school.
1894	Mennonite Book and Tract Society organized. Members were: J. S. Coffman, M. S. Steiner and G. L. Bender.
1895	First sewing circle in Indiana-Michigan Conference organized at Prairie Street Church.
1895	Church-wide organization set up to control Elkhart Institute.
1896	Home and Foreign Relief Committee organized. Members were: G. Lambert, G. L. Bender, J. S. Lehman, C. K. Hostetler and A. C. Kolb.
Jan. 6, 1896	Elkhart Institute building dedicated.
1898	Elkhart Institute Association incorporated. Officers were: H. A. Mumaw, president; J. S. Hartzler, vice president; A. C. Kolb, secretary; Herman Yoder, treasurer.
Nov. 4, 1898	J. A. Ressler and Dr. and Mrs. Page appointed first missionaries to India in a meeting that continued until 2:00 A.M.
1901	Church building raised and new entrance built.
July 28, 1907	G. L. Bender ordained Deacon.
April 2, 1913	Young People's Social and Literary Association organized, one of the first in the Mennonite Church.
April 13, 1914	Trustees voted favorably inviting the Mennonite Mission Board to make Elkhart permanent headquarters.
1914	William Weaver ordained to the ministry. Assumed pastorate September 13.
1920	Oliver Grosh ordained Deacon.

July 27, 1920	Mennonite Central Committee organized at Prairie Street Church.
1920 – 1922	Afternoon Sunday school opened at McQuiston schoolhouse, 1800 York St.; Cleo Mann, Harold Bender, W. W. Christophel and V. E. Reiff among workers.
July 1-11, 1923	First summer Bible school held. This is probably one of the oldest continuous summer Bible schools in the Mennonite Church. At first there was no regularly adopted course. The first superintendent was Edwin L. Weaver. Some of the teachers were J. S. Hartzler, Carol Miller and Dora Shantz.
1926 – 1928	Sunday school extension in old U.B. church in northeast Elkhart.
Jan. 23, 1929	Sunday school opened in Sterling Addition in five-room house. C. W. Leininger, superintendent; J. E. Gingrich, assistant superintendent and teacher; Helen (Mann) Patrick, secretary-treasurer; Velma (Pletcher) Good, Lela Mann, Jason Miller and Alice (Hostetler) Stutzman were teachers. (This was the beginning of the Belmont Church.)
Feb. 15, 1931	Church building severely damaged by fire.
March 23, 1931	Last meeting, a prayer meeting, held in damaged church building before demolition was begun.
June 17, 1929	Sunshine Male Chorus organized at home of Enos Mumaw.
July 26, 1931	First meeting held in partially completed basement.
Dec. 10, 1933	John Gingrich ordained to the ministry in last meeting held in basement.
Dec. 17, 1933	First meeting held in partly completed sanctuary.
1935	H. S. Alexander ordained Deacon.
Dec. 20, 1933	Twenty were baptized, 17 in church and 3 in stream, and 11 were received otherwise.
Jan. 10, 1934	First funeral held in sanctuary was that of Mary E. Shantz.



Four Young Women

**Top : Lavona (Berkey) Ebersole, Adeline Brunk.
Bottom: Anna (Holderman) Miller,
Fannie (Coffman) Landis.**



Sunshine Quartet, about 1917

William Moyer, Enos Mumaw, Walter Yoder, Harold Bender.

Spring, 1936

Sunday school opened in Pleasant View Church north of Goshen.

1938

Paul Wittrig ordained to the ministry.

1940

Leroy L. Hostetler ordained to the ministry.

Nov. 3, 1940

Completed church building formally dedicated in special services.

1959 — 1960

Extensive renovation of sanctuary and addition of education and fellowship annex undertaken.

Sept. 11, 1960

Dedication services for completed enlargement and renovated building.

Publication

J. F. Funk started publishing in Chicago in 1864 and moved to Elkhart in 1867 where he established, in 1875, the Mennonite Publishing Company, which continued as a vigorous and influential private company with a substantial Mennonite publications list until 1908, when most of the business was sold, although Funk operated the M.P.C. until 1925 for the full length of its fifty year charter.

During the years 1880 to 1900 the M.P.C. became the center for a group of progressive, younger men who found in its activities almost the only available outlet for their desire to serve in the church and who made significant contributions to the new day in the church. Among them were A. B. Kolb, A. C. Kolb, F. W. Brunk, J. S. Coffman, G. L. Bender and John Horsch.

The Home and Foreign Relief Commission

The Home and Foreign Relief Commission was organized under the auspices of the Mennonite Evangelizing and Benevolent Board, by J. F. Funk, G. L. Bender, George Lambert, C. K. Hostetler, and seven others (most of them associated with the Mennonite Publishing Company) at Elkhart on March 2, 1897, for the immediate purpose of famine relief in India. In April 1897 George Lambert was sent to India to supervise the distribution of the funds of HFRC and the grain for which it was responsible. Brother Lambert made further trips to India and published a book picturing in vivid detail the terrible famine conditions in India.

The organization functioned at first as an inter-Mennonite relief organization, and thus foreshadowed the Mennonite Central Committee, but gradually limited its activities to the (Old) Mennonite group. It ceased to exist in 1906 when absorbed by the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities.

Mennonite Central Committee

At a meeting held in the Prairie Street Church on July 27, 1920 the Mennonite Central Committee was organized to operate a joint Mennonite famine relief program in Russia. This combined Mennonite Relief Committee had been requested by several Mennonite relief committees of North America at that time engaged in sending relief to the Mennonites in Russia. Four Mennonite representatives from Russia attended the meeting and also urged the formation of this Central Committee.



Mennonite Publishing Company

Mission Beginnings

On December 28, 1882, at a meeting of the Prairie Street congregation, under the chairmanship of J. F. Funk, The Mennonite Evangelizing Committee was formed. This was a committee of the Prairie Street congregation, but it represented the beginning of organized mission work in the Mennonite Church. The main purpose was to collect and disburse funds to defray the expenses of ministers traveling to visit scattered members and churches. A decade later J. S. Coffman traveled widely as he held meetings among these scattered Mennonite groups. In retrospect we see how significant a ministry this was.

In 1892 the name was changed to Mennonite Evangelizing Board of America with membership from other district conferences, and in 1896 to Mennonite Evangelizing and Benevolent Board to include charitable functions. In 1906 it developed into the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, renamed in 1971 as Mennonite Board of Missions.



Elkhart Institute

Elkhart Institute

The forerunner of Goshen College was a secondary school established at Elkhart, Indiana, by a group of laymen and ministers of the Prairie Street Church to offer educational opportunities to the young people of the Mennonite Church. During the first year, Aug. 21, 1894 to June 4, 1895, it was a small proprietary school owned and operated by Dr. H. A. Mumaw, a physician with a strong interest in education, and conducted in the G.A.R. Hall in downtown Elkhart.

On May 16, 1895 the Elkhart Institute Association was incorporated under the laws of Indiana. This organization took over the school and continued to operate it until 1903 at Elkhart, then in Goshen as Goshen College to 1906, when it turned over the school to the newly organized official church agency, the Mennonite Board of Education. The first and only building of the Institute in Elkhart was located on a lot almost directly across the street from the meeting house, now used as one of the congregation's parking lots.

Prairie Street Cemetery

The Prairie Street Cemetery on East Hively Avenue is controlled by the Prairie Street Mennonite Church. The cemetery was started in 1895 by Lewis Kulp, an early member of the church. The Trustee record book says, "Bro. Lewis Kulp purchased five acres of land beyond the city limits to be laid out in lots for a cemetery, and agreed to hold it in trust for the congregation until the receipts from the sale of lots paid for it."



Russell and Martha Krabill

A Forward Look

It is good to take a frequent and square look at the past. There is, however, a Christian way of viewing the past. As Christians we do not live in the past nor worship it. We seek to learn from it and then press forward. Jesus said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow, and then continues to look back is fitted for service in the kingdom of God." Luke 9:62 (Williams)

Paul said, "Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race..." Philippians 3:13-14 (Living N.T.)

When Paul looked into the future, what did he see?

He saw people. He saw people in Athens, in Rome, in Spain. He saw Jews and Gentiles, civilized and heathen, educated and uneducated, rich and poor, slave and free. Paul felt a burden for them all. He did not shrink from declaring all of God's message to them.

As we look into the future, we, too, see people:

People who are lost, oppressed and poor;
People who must be led to Christ for forgiveness and peace;
People who need to be loved and helped;
People who must be nurtured in the things of God.

People are most important. God loves them; Christ died for them; we are called to witness to them.

The future could frighten us. We have not traveled this way before. With Christ, however, we can be confident. He knows the way. He provides the strength.

His Holy Spirit will guide us into new and exciting ways of meeting the challenge of the days ahead.

—Russell Krabill, pastor



J. B. Shenk



Howard J. Zehr



J. D. Graber



Church Council and Board of Elders, 1971

Seated: Russell Krabill, Margaret Birky, Arlene Mark, Sam Fry. Standing: Lyn Hershey, Boyd Nelson, Jack Hostetter, Ward Stahly, Ray Horst, Luke Birky, Jacob Sudermann, Virgil Graber and Lloyd Hartzler.

ELKHART
MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY



Church Building, 1940

Church Building, 1960



ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY



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